



## The Friends of Chain Bridge Forge Blacksmith Day Books

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- Ian So continuing from last time, Geoff, can you talk through the day books and the sort of work that you would have been aware of that both you and maybe your father and grandfather were undertaking when you were growing up.
- Geoff I got grandfather's day books from about 1912, not quite continuous, right up to, there's another one roundabout 1940, certainly from then you can see the change that was happening. The names of firms which began to appear in the 1920s and garages in town and another big change was just before the war Dutch names began to appear, Dutch bulb merchants were setting up business in this country.
- Ian And why did they come over?
- Geoff Presumably commercial reasons, to sell bulbs,
- Ian And that's where their expertise lay?
- Geoff Oh yes, I'm sure it did. The bulb industry in Holland was a lot bigger than it was over here although their bulb growers ,,,, the Culpins and Whites, they were starting to sell bulbs I'm sure ... before 1920 I would think but not in a particularly big way but the Dutch obviously had been major bulb firms for a long long while before that, right through in the 1800s.
- Ian I see. And what impact did the First World War have on your family?
- Geoff Well, the biggest impact was of course, we mentioned my father had started a precision engineering apprenticeship, Grandfather was short handed and had him come home to help. Work in the First World War I wouldn't think changed very much from before the war.
- Ian And were they reserved occupations
- Geoff I don't know, First World War, I imagine they could have been. Father wasn't old enough and grandfather would have been too old to have been involved but I wouldn't think they would have taken him away from the business.
- Ian So looking at, for example you mentioned there being day books, let's say 1912, what sort of work would have been the bread and butter at the forge at that time?
- Geoff I would think farm work mainly and then work for Grooms, the timber merchants in High Street who were making chicken houses and ladders and farm yard tool work, mangers, pig troughs.
- Ian And would there have been, would the bread and butter have been the shoeing of horses or was that only a small part of the work that he did?
- Geoff I've not looked at the day books as close .. I've read them but to collate the types of work but I would think farm work would have been the biggest proportion.
- Ian And can you give an example of the sort of farm work your grandfather and father would have been working on so when you say farm work, specifically what would they have been doing?
- Geoff Mainly repairs to tools and equipment. During the winter there would have been general servicing of harrows particularly were always in the workshop to be sharpened and repaired. Ploughs would come in and there would often be a couple of ploughs standing outside the workshop waiting to be serviced really, just generally repaired.
- Ian And were these sturdy things or was it just the work that they did was quite .....
- Geoff I think it was just fair wear and tear.
- Ian And how would you, how would they have gone about repairing something like a harrow?
- Geoff Harrow would er, well they were just dismantled. The tines taken out and sharpened or laid (?), that is if they were too, if there had been too much of the tine worn away to be able to sharpen it up. Forge weld on a piece of iron on the bottom and hammer it out into a virtually new tine.
- Ian And that is in terms of what the farmers used to bring in. If you were a householder and you had a piece of equipment that needed sharpening, repairing or replacing what sort of examples would there have been of that?
- Geoff There were a lot of people had an allotment and an allotment in those days wasn't a 30 yd by 10 yd allotment of today. A lot of working men would probably have half an acre of allotment and there would be tools, jack hoes was a tool that you walked backwards and pulled and it could be fitted sometimes with a small plough breast or hoe blades. I mean, grandfather made jack hoes.

They were .. fairly regularly people would be .. jack hoes lasted a life time but he was still making new jack hoes.

Ian And was the emphasis very much on repairing whatever was brought in as opposed to people buying new things?

Geoff Yes, I don't think ... grandfather didn't make a lot of new agricultural tools. I certainly remember him making a big heavy duck foot drag which is on the same principal as a harrow but much much bigger. That wouldn't be a horse drawn implement, it would be a tractor drawn implement.

Ian So would it be fair to say that anything metal, anything iron would, that people would use your father and grandfather would have repaired for the local population?

Geoff Oh yes, certainly and made too. Something rather bigger than what we think of as a garden rake or heavier than a garden rake that an allotment holder would need and a blacksmith made rake was a substantial tool rather more than the sort of rake that we think of in a garden centre today.

Ian And would it be fair to say that there was a certain amount of variation in what they did on a day to day basis so one day they could be making a rake, another day could be repairing a harrow.

Geoff Oh absolutely, harrows and a skerry was a horse drawn hoe, really for loosening up the ground between potato rows.

Ian And in terms of conveyances so things like traps or even carriages, would they have worked on anything like that?

Geoff I'm not very .. I wouldn't think so, no.

Ian Who would have done work on things like that?

Geoff Oh a coach builder, a proper coach builder.

Ian And were there coach builders in and around Spalding.

Geoff Yes, indeed, there was a coach builder just in the top of Roman Bank, on the left, just past the Pigeon Pub, name ... sorry

Ian We'll come back to that. There was a clear division in terms of which establishment did what sort of a task.

Geoff Oh sure yes,

Ian And the two could co-exist?

Geoff Oh certainly yes. Freddie Creamer was the coach builder. Now he had his own blacksmith.

Ian I see

Geoff His name was Mr. Dade. After Creamer gave up his business, there was a nurseryman lived quite close to him and he actually built Dadey a little workshop at the top of, on Holbeach Road, at the top of Queens Road so that he could continue in business. I suppose it was a charitable thing that he did because Dadey sort of would have been out work.

Ian I see. And we're talking about the time when, we're talking about pounds, shillings and pence so old money, so was 240 old pennies to the old pound.

Geoff That's it

Ian And what sort of things would have cost just a few odd pennies to make?

Geoff

Ian So we're looking at the day books now and we've just alighted onto a date that is August 9<sup>th</sup> 1913, could you just sort of go through the entries for that day, Geoff, and perhaps obviously give the amount that was paid but perhaps explain what they were and what it was for.

Geoff The first item is a Mr. Birch. Grandfather would have known whether that would be G.F. Birch, the millers in High Street or his brother who farmed at Weston, forget the name of the road, Lingarden as it is now, was but grandfather would have known – 6 shoes, repairs to winding farrow, winding farrow was a devise on wheels which had a handle and could lift up sacks of corn so the man could get it onto his back. .... The repairs to the winding farrow was 2s. The 6 shoes were 6s. The 6s, I think, the 6s covered the six shoes and the repairs and two false links, a repair of chains 3d. Frank Tointon, don't know quite where he, probably it was Tointon who lived in Yew Lodge in High Street which was later George Elsom's home – 12 shoes, 4 feet dressed, that's trimmed because farm horses didn't always have shoes on the back feet, the work's done with the front feet. And a new fork shaft, came to 8s 8d. Sketcher – 1 shoe 8d. Nicholls, now Nicholls I think that would be the hay and straw merchant who had the .. used to have shop almost opposite the workshop – 1 file – so it looks as if grandfather would have a stock files which he would .. for sale retail, 2 bolts, 5 false links and nails 1s 9d. Pannell, that would be Joe Pannell, the boat builder on Albion Street or Marsh Road down towards the West Elloe Bridge, but this time I wouldn't think he was doing an awful lot of boat building, he'd be boat repairing but he also had, he also had the repairing of the sluice gates over quite a big, quite a big area in town and grandfather, I presume grandfather did, but father quite often ..... town ..... but father quite often would spend a day or more working with Joe Pannell and Joe would do the woodwork and father would see to the ironwork so this item is 4 bolts and they weighed 10lbs so they would be quite big bolts, 2s 6d. T.O. Mawby farmed down Spalding Marsh – 2 shoes, 1s 2d. Course they're quite a long way out of town but they would be bringing farm produce probably into town quite regularly I would think so it would be no problem for them to have a horse call and get some shoes on while he was in the town.

Ian And would your father or grandfather, would they have had cause to actually do any work outside of the forge or would everything be done at the forge?

Geoff Oh very often yes. My father in particular. But this was 1913, certainly before my father started work but he, and the two of them would go out to, I mean we've got Tom Mawby here, Tom Mawby's brother who farmed out at Holbeach St. Johns, there were blacksmiths nearer than my father and grandfather but they regularly went to Tom Mawby's brother at Holbeach St. Johns and I can remember that it would take them two days to shoe all the horses on the farm, they would go two consecutive days and take the shoes with them and that would be cold shoeing, there would be no forge there so the shoes wouldn't actually get burned on but if you take a bit more care trimming the foot down so that it's level and the load is spread and the shoe fits then cold shoeing is nearly as good as burning on but not quite perhaps. There we are, the two shoes for Tom Mawby 1s 2d. The local board, that would be the predecessors of the local council, 2 shoes 1s 4d. so Mawby's shoes cost 7d each and the local board's 8d., the would probably have been bigger or perhaps a heavier shoe, the council, the board shoes would have been working in town where there were cobbled roads so would perhaps that bit heavier shoe on. John Nicholls, not sure who he would have been, whether he was any connection with the Nicholls who was the local straw merchant, ..

Ian Would they have charged a different price depending on whether they knew the customer very well?

Geoff I wouldn't think so, no. No, I wouldn't think it would be, wouldn't be the local ..... I think it would simply be probably put a heavier shoe on. John Nicholls 1 shoe. F. Sly, Fred Sly, he was a farmer at Fulney, just on the Fulney side of Spalding. Sly was the man that built Dadey the workshop, 2 shoes 1s 2d. H. Birch, ah here we are, Harold Birch, that was the brother of G.F. Birch, Harold Birch at Weston, 2 haynes hooks. The haynes were the two curved bits of iron that went around the horses collar and actually had the hook attached to them where the chains were connected for doing the work. 2 haynes hooks and a new bolt 10d. Grandfather would probably have had haynes hooks ready made in the workshop. Pretty, George Pretty had a .. was a smallholder on the Weston road, between right hand side, between Springfields and The Gate pub which stood, which is no longer a pub at the cross roads about a mile out of town and George

Pretty farmed there – 3 new bolts, rod altering to reaper .... 6d. Sketcher, again 2 shoes 1s 4d. Andrews – 1 file paid 6d. B. Peak – 2 removes. Jack Peak was a builder and contractor in Double Street, wouldn't know if there was any connection. Pretty again, the same day – 2 removes 7d. Now removes ..er removes was taking off and if the shoe was not worn out but the foot needed trimming down because the hoof keeps growing, take off the old shoe, trim the foot down and refit the shoe –7d. That was half the cost of a new shoe. That's the one days work.

Ian And that's just one day's work.

Geoff One day's work

Ian In 1913. If we can compare it with the day book that you've got here which is dating to just after the second World War. So we're looking at, if we may, the 31<sup>st</sup> January 1946 and can you just sort of go through the items there and explain anything about them.

Geoff Yup, er, well, Jink, Fred Jinks actually farmed next door to George Pretty on the Weston ramper. Plough repaired, father spells it plow, 2 handles, 2 axles pins, colter blade – the colter was the blade that fitted perfectly to the plough and cut into the ground on the left hand side of the furrow so that the rest could then turn the furrow over and that would be a fairly regular job, colters wore out quite quickly. How many times it went up and down a field the colter laid. New marker, I think that would probably be a fitting to the plough, for ordinary ploughing you didn't use a marker but for certain jobs the marker at the side which was fitted to the side of the plough had a small spike on it which marked the line for the next furrow. That lot came to 14s. A. Elsom, Albert Elsom, that was the brother of George Elsom – hay knife repaired 1s. A hay knife was a big cutting blade, nearly 2 ft. long and thin, thin like a scythe blade but 4 or 5 ins wide with a handle set at right angles for cutting into a hay stack. You could use it to cut vertically into a hay stack, the hay by then had been well compressed and you'd be able to pick up a tablet of hay which they could then put onto a hay fork and it would stay compact. Sometimes they were called a stack knife, hay knife – 1s. Sutcliffe, don't know who that would be, wheel welded, that's obviously a mud guard on a vehicle. Yes, Sutcliffe, here we are, 1946, Sutcliffes were a firm from Mithleroyd in Yorkshire who were tarmac layers and they set up a depot in Laws Yard here, very close to the shop ..

Ian Is that because some of the roads were being tarmaced?

Geoff Oh yes, oh ... all the roads were tarmaced ..... I wouldn't think many new roads apart from development areas for building would be laying down new roads, most of the roads in the south of the county were tarmaced, don't quite know when the date was but over a very short period all the country roads would have been tarmaced, in fact certainly in this century anyway. Yes, 3s for welding the wing. Gleed School – netball ring welded 1s 6d. Stasson, Stassons were a bulb merchants and wholesalers just over the Pinchbeck Road Vernatts Bridge, on the right hand side, in fact that was the first firm I built a tulip float for. Stassons – heel tree cap and hook. The heel tree was the wooden strecher between the two chains connected up to the horses collar, one either side, chain either side of the horse obviously, and a hook in the middle to attach the heel tree to the plough or whatever implement they were using. Settlement, that's the Land Settlement Association at Fulney who'd set up houses, each with an acre or so of land and a greenhouse, a pig sty and a small barn at Fulney for unemployed miners up in the south-east, north-east sorry. Unemployed miners to get them started in agriculture which some of them did very successfully, particularly during the war. They were able to ...

Ian And this migration started, so presumably there was obviously the Depression we're familiar with in the 1930s, would they have come down before the Second World War?

Geoff Er .. yes, yes, yes, yes that would ... don't know quite remember when it would be but certainly a few years before the war.

Ian So people were relocating ...

Geoff ... in the late 30s

Ian So the phrase, you know, 'get on your bike and look for work' ...

Geoff Yes ..

Ian These people really had got their bike and were shipped out with their families lock stock and barrel.

Geoff Yes, that's it, yes, I suppose, there were a number of settlements in the country, just how the .... it was a Government scheme so I suppose the offers were made where they lived.

Ian And so presumably some local Spalding area residents can trace their heritage to the north-east.

Geoff Yes, they can, yes. Not all of them made it, it was so very different I should think from coal mining to work on the land and there was a central office and all their produce was taken into the centre where there were staff who did the packing and the ...

Ian ... the promotion

Geoff Yes, that's it, they were, I think they were legally bound to put all their produce through, through the centre. Didn't always happen/

Ian Can you think of a modern day equivalent that is currently in Spalding?

Geoff Well Lingarden originally was set up in a similar way, I think, not as a Government project but growers would combine to centralise their marketing and packaging.

Ian And I suppose the really modern equivalent may be the Red Lion Quarter where you've got produce locally grown?

Geoff Yes, perhaps. So items for the Land Settlement - ??? chimney clasp and hook, that would have been a chimney for a green house, each holding had a small greenhouse with a boiler, would have been that or it might have been the chimney of a .. 14 yds of chain £2 10s., I imagine that would have been factory made chain grandfather would have stocked. Flue brush lengthened, yes, it's obviously something to do with the boiler, 2s 6d. Yes, that's that day's work.

Ian That's that day so compared with 1913, so compared with just before the 1<sup>st</sup> World War and the entry we've just talked about, just after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, what major changes in the work that was being done strikes you?

Geoff Well, there isn't an awful lot really, is there? Not there, I mean, Jinks, Elsom, Stassens and the Settlement, that's four out of the seven or eight items, still connected with the land and agriculture in some way.

Ian Would there have been less emphasis on the shoeing and removing of horseshoes?

Geoff There are no shoes up there, are there? No shoes at all and looking through, sort of two, three, four, five, yes, that's about a week, four shoes there, .. four shoes there .. two there so that's six, that's eight, ten, ten shoes, that's it, ten, ten horseshoes in a week in 1946.

Ian Whereas it would be unusual to do less than 10 shoes in a day ..

Geoff Oh certainly it was ..

Ian .. before the 1st World War.

Geoff Yes, yes, my father recalled locking up the workshop one evening or late afternoon at the end of the day with his father and grandfather said to him – we ent shod a horse boy. Father was well past being a boy then but ..

Ian Yes. And what was the .. did you have any indication as to what the average weekly wage would have been at this time?

Geoff I think grandfather probably wasn't paying my father much more than a couple of pounds a week. He could have earned more working for somebody else I'm quite sure. Yeah

Ian But compared with the average wage the blacksmith was turning over a sufficient amount of money?

Geoff Oh I'm sure, yes, I'm sure grandfather himself was making more money than he would've working for somebody else but of course the assumption was that my father would take over the business and then he'd be in that position but a bit late in the day really.

Ian And what, do you recall what the relationship, if any there would have been, with the bank? Would your grandfather / father, would they have had a relationship with their local bank manager?

Geoff Well, yea, I'm sure everybody had but most businessmen would have had in those days but I think sort of grandfather's income was fairly regular all the year round and I don't suppose he had much recourse to the bank other than to put the money in and to draw it out as he needed. What does .. this was 1946, what did we say.. 10 shoes in a week wasn't it but by the time I came home in 1948-49 I was shoeing, putting on more than, probably shoeing on average, three horses in every two weeks because '46 was just after the war, that's when the horses began to disappear.

Ian I see, yea, so that leads us nicely on to talking about war time and specifically the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. You obviously can remember times before the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, you were a schoolboy, talk us through perhaps a day just before the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and the sort of things you remember and the sort of place Spalding was at that time.

Geoff Certainly I had been at the council school from starting school, that would be 1933-34. I had ... my first day at school, a young girl, I suppose she was 12-13 who lived just on the other side of the river undertook to take to school for the first few days and it wasn't very far and traffic wasn't very heavy so quite quickly at 5 yrs. old I was walking to school on my own although more often than not you met up with mates going in the same direction. I'm told I was a quick learner apparently, went to the school for the first morning, came home for lunch and told mother and father oh well it's time I went back to school. I'd learnt something in the first half day.

Ian And what sort of place was Spalding at that time? What were your recollections of life generally in Spalding?

Geoff I don't know, everything seemed so free and easy. The concerns we had about our own children, not that we worried but we .. I mean we played as a group of lads, I mean the whole area was our playground, ... Laws Yard .. there was a ... Laws had a slaughter house just at the end of High Street, backed in Willow Walk and back to back with that was Bert Barker's slaughter house but the whole lot was open to us. We went and watched the slaughtermen in both the slaughter houses and beg a piece eye to play with from them, from the slaughterman.

Ian And was it a very busy place or was it the pace of life? Meaning quite slow.

Geoff Quite slow I think, really. From .. from Laws Yard, from Laws paddock which we could play, quite friendly with the Laws' boys, the two families have been fairly close, 1920s grandfather and T. Law, T. Law & Son, were contemporaries and lived next door to each other and my father and Ted Law, the sons, were of the same age, and had been to school together and I and .... the Law grandchildren were the same age roughly and all this was open to us. Nobody bothered that we played in the paddock or around the slaughter house.

Ian And would people have travelled great distances, I mean, would, I'm thinking now people might take themselves off to Boston or to Peterborough or even London, was there .. was there any travel like that?

Geoff Not very much I think, I mean I didn't see London until I went into the army at 18, was my first visit to London. While I was at the council school, 1938-39, there was only one other child in my class whose family had a car. He was a senior insurance agent in area but my father and grandfather had a car for the business between them so my father was often in demand to taxi people here and there. He .. in 1938 they had quite a big car, an Austin 12 was it and one thing that father did, I suppose, ... out of the kindness of his heart or whether he made a little bit out of it he used to take folk to the theatre, the Embassy Theatre at Peterborough. He would take a group of people for .. it was a variety theatre and often two shows each evening. He would take a group for the first house, take a group for the second house and bring back the first group and then go back again or wait perhaps and bring back the second group occasionally because I don't suppose public transport would have got them to the theatre comfortably.

Ian And were there such things as holidays or days out?

Geoff Days out .. er .. well fortunately we with the car, we went regularly to the seaside at the weekend on a Sunday through the summer when the weather was fit.

Ian Where did you go?

Geoff Heacham usually, as children my brother and I were always asking dad to take us to Hunstanton or Huns'ton because there were amusements at Huns'ton but amusements meant you spent money so we didn't get to Huns'ton very often. At Heacham there was a little kiosk on the beach which sold pots of tea on a tray and that would be the only expense really apart from perhaps and ice cream if we were lucky.

Ian How much was petrol?

Geoff I think about 1s 6d a gallon, I think.

Ian And as far as the start of the second World War, you had a radio?

Geoff Yes, yes, my father as a side-line charged wireless accumulators, that's the glass battery that free mains radios had. Each radio had a high tension battery which was something like 110v, simply a series of what we see as a series of ordinary little batteries strapped together in a box. Each radio had that and a grid bias battery which was a 9v battery as well for various parts of the radio and a 1.5 and 2v accumulator which was usually a glass rechargeable battery. The charging set was still in the loft workshop and originally in early days he had a motorbike with a big box on the side for a side car and he'd go one night in the week probably in the Queens Road area, Royce Road and Roman Bank, another night to Winsover

Road, the council estate down there, obviously where there were a lot of houses in a small area and deliver a battery and bring the flat one back for recharging for the next week and 6d a time.

Ian Right, and do you remember war being declared?

Geoff Er ... yes, only just but just what it meant to us I'm not sure but thinking back, all through the war we knew there was fighting but there was never any thought of losing a war. But it was just a matter of .. it was only going to be a matter of time, I suppose that was probably the way the propaganda effected us, but at .. sort of 11 to 14-15 yrs old it probably didn't quite sink in.

Ian And did you listen to Chamberlain's broadcast or do you remember you family doing that or .. ?

Geoff No, not on the wireless anyway, certainly it was covered in the daily newspaper which of course we had. Rationing and all of that, we took in our stride, I think, it was just part of life because we'd not known anything else. I mean, I'm sure it was difficult for our mothers.

Ian Were parts difficult to come by in a war setting?

Geoff Yes, I don't recall the supply of steel was regulated in any way but I think it must have been limited but the sort of work my grandfather was doing, well it was essential. There were ... I remember one or two chops they did during the war, we used to make ... they made many many hundreds rings 10-12 ins in diameter out of steel, thin, about eighth of an inch thick, 4-5 ins wide of rings. I think they were made for filling with concrete to make road blocks, to put across roads...

Ian So for home defense.

Geoff That's it, yes.

Ian In case the worst happened.

Geoff Another time they made a lot of clamps to bolt two Lewis machine guns side by side 12-15 ins apart to be mounted on a tripod, I think for anti-aircraft work so they could use two machine guns at the same time.

Ian And being a predominately agricultural area, you mentioned rationing was something you took in your stride, was that because people like your family and others could supplement their diet because of allotments?

Geoff Yes, father took an allotment. The Cley Hall park which was behind .. Cley Hall was Birch's home, between .. Cley Hall Park was between High Street and Halmergate, it was nothing but a big field really but was known as the Park and half of that was ploughed up during the war for allotments, again as I said, to took 30 x 10 yds strips and my father had, certainly had one of those to grow vegetables.

Ian And what do you recall about the pace of life? Did it quicken because of the war? Or did life carry on pretty much as ...

Geoff Not noticeably, I think, yep .

Ian If I were to press you on a time when change really seemed to speed up, when would you say that would be?

Geoff I suppose when I started work but that may not have been ... that was just a change in my life but not ... perhaps if I'd been working all through the war then I would have noticed it but no.

Ian And did you notice, so er, we're talking about the war, did you notice there being an influx of different people during the war? Were there servicemen stationed here?

Geoff Yes, I think the first thing we noticed early .. at the Grammar School there were quite a big group of Polish officers came. I'm not sure if they were living in Spalding, I rather think they were, they certainly came to Spalding Grammar School in the evenings and some of the Grammar School staff were helping to teach them English and then after a while we noticed it because they used the school field. Different groups of soldiers came to Spalding, I don't recall who the earlier ones were. Later towards the end of the war paratroopers were stationed, a division of paratroopers were stationed on the Grammar School field. There were army huts around and there was a headquarters in a house on London Road.

Ian And before we break for a moment, just answer me this question. If I was transported back to the middle of the second World War would I have known there was a war on and why?

Geoff Probably not. ...sort of went into the shops to buy something and then of course, without a ration book there wasn't very much that you could buy – food and fuel and clothes were all affected. Again that didn't affect me personally but very much, except the fact that I didn't have to wear a school uniform. I had a ... when I started the school in 1940 the uniform was a black pin stripe suit with a waistcoat or grey

flannels and blazer and a cap was compulsory, a cap but of course with clothes rationing that all had to be dropped. People wore what they could.

Ian Yes and was there a blackout ?

Geoff Yes, indeed.

Ian Rigorously enforced?

Geoff Absolutely, yes, yes, rigorously. At one stage, right next to my workshop what had been built as a sail makers shop, been turned into a fish and chip shop in 1911, it looked very likeable Yorkshireman took it over and just in Willow Walk, he wasn't, well he was generally disliked I would say but there was a rumour that he was a German spy because he was summoned for showing a light through a skylight in his house at some stage. I think that's where the rumour started. I think he was trying to help German aircraft. Most unlikely.

Ian Can you remember lots of military uniforms in and around Spalding? Was there evidence like that?

Geoff No, I think apart from being at school where, of course, they were billeted, occasionally we saw them out on exercise. We played on the school .. they put out a rugby team to play against the Grammar School boys but generally in town they were, yes, they were around but there weren't so many of them they overwhelmed me. Just along High Street Chislehurst, that's a house now gone, just along on the north side of Birch's Cley Hall and it blocked the Birch family, it occupied ... it had been empty for some time, army requisitioned it for a small group of soldiers. I think they had a cobblers shop in there I'm not sure what else for a small group of soldiers.

Ian And there was never any doubt that we were going to win?

Geoff I .. we. I'm sure, well not in our minds anyway ....